554 In addition to the glory of being an owner of a head, he was a valuable economic asset due to the charm that the head exerted over game.

726 622 Warfare was an occasion upon which the position of the chief became of great importance. The young warriors depended heavily on his experience and leadership. His authority was not unlimited, but it was more fully exercised and more necessary to successful results than during any peaceful endeavor in the village.

726 181 This is only a brief sketch of Munduruc̃ú warfare for its complexity rivaled the war patterns of the North American Plains Indians. To the Munduruc̃ú, themselves, it was the most important single pursuit and characterized their way of life more than any other activity. Its results were extremely destructive to other tribes but was a source of élan and vitality in Munduruc̃ú culture.

Religion

771 The following discussion of Munduruc̃ú religion will be brief and will touch mainly on those points pertinent to the problem of socio-cultural integration. In conformity with Tropical Forest patterns, the religious system was of great simplicity. There were the typical Tupian spirits of animal, fish, and plant species, souls of the dead and certain malignant spirits.[22] Magic was simple and usually directed towards antisocial ends. The only specialist was the shaman. All the males participated in the ceremonials

22. cf. Wagley and Galvão, 1949, pp. 102-109; Oberg, 1953, pp. 53-4.

771 to a degree that varied slightly with their ceremonial knowledge.

775 Spirits

[774] The Munduruc̃ú spirits consisted of three rough classes. These were souls of the dead, spirit "mothers" of animals, fish, and plant species, and a variety of malignant beings. The soul was known as the ibiõnbõk, which also means shadow and image, and lived after death in the land of the sky, which was a hemispherical dome placed over a flat earth. The afterworld was a pleasant place where there were Munduruc̃ú villages and the old Munduruc̃ú culture was active. The souls of the dead were not dangerous and remained aloof from human society with the exception of that of the sorcerer which had to be destroyed after he was killed. Otherwise, the only time that the soul was malignant was when a very sick person lost his soul during sleep or a coma. The soul wandered abroad and tried to rob the souls of sleeping people. The Munduruc̃ú distinguished the "real" soul (ibiõnbõk), which was located in the center of the back, from the ibiõnbõk which was the reflection or the shadow of the person. The latter persisted after death also and, under circumstances to be discussed later, could roam the world as a certain type of evil spirit.

Souls could also be lost through offending the spirit "mother" of a game animal. The spirit "mother" robbed the soul and passed it from one game animal to another and finally through all the species of fish. This journey of

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797 175 [161] rise in rubber prices in the latter part of the 1920's was partly responsible for causing the people of some savannah villages to migrate to the rubber-yielding forests along the Cururú River. Today, some 200 Indians reside at the mission, and another 300 are also clients of the priests.

797 771 Although this is not a study of changes in Mundurucú religion consequent upon proselytization, it is necessary to survey briefly the effects of the mission upon native belief in order to interpret the data to be presented. Catechization is most actively pressed among those Indians on the Cururú River with whom the mission has trade contacts. The other 200 residents of the Cururú River have their closest relations with the local post of the Serviço de Proteção aos Indios and only occasionally encounter the priests. The residents of the Tapajós River are far too scattered to be accessible with any frequency to the missionaries; these Mundurucú receive Christian influences through prayer sessions and religious fiestas held at the trading posts and through informal discourse with their Brazilian neighbors. The residents of the savannah villages maintain trade relations with the traders of the Tapajós River, but they are visited once a year by a priest who performs baptisms and remains for two or three days in each village to give religious instruction.

The personnel of the mission have proceeded with some degree of tact and restraint in their conversion of the Mundurucú population. All Mundurucú are technically Catholic, having been baptized, but only a minority have received all the subsequent sacraments. Children in residence at the mission school are administered Communion, and at intervals of several years the Bishop of Santarém visits the mission to hold Confirmation rites for those ready to receive them. All Indians in the villages under mission influence are married in religious ceremonies. These rites generally are the result of considerable pressure by the priests and follow a period of marriage according to native custom. The Indians themselves look upon the public marriage ceremony as most embarassing and shame-provoking and make every effort to avoid it. The sacrament of Extreme Unction is administered only to people who die at the mission itself. Otherwise, the customary funeral rites are followed and the body is interred under the floor of the dwelling.

Each Sunday a number of Mundurucú arrive at the mission for the primary purpose of trading and with the secondary intent of visiting; they are strongly urged to attend Sunday Mass, and most do as a means of keeping in the good graces of the prestigeful and respected missionaries. The superior of the mission has spent more than thirty years among the Mundurucú and speaks the language fluently. All of the Mass except the part universally recited in Latin is given in the Indian tongue. The Mundurucú observe the social division of the sexes while attending church. The front pews are occupied by the nuns and the 40-odd children usually resident at the school, and the remaining seats are occupied by the men. Most remain in a rigid kneeling position throughout the service, with the exception of one or two old men who imitate and even anticipate the ritual postures of the nuns. The women sit cross-legged on the floor of the center aisle; many nurse their children during the rites.

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Attendance at church services is always greatest on such special holy days as Christmas, Easter, and the feast of St. Francis, the patron of the mission. The nuns serve refreshments to the participants, and dances are held in the houses of the Mundurucú who reside at the mission. These occasions unite hundreds of people and thus serve as the social equivalents of the now defunct tribal ceremonies devoted to the game-animal spirits.

Most Mundurucú ceremonies are no longer practiced by any segment of the population. The priests have made special efforts to discourage the practice of native rites in those Cururú River villages under their influence, and only the ceremony to regain stolen souls is still held. This rite requires the participation of only three or four shamans and two men who possess knowledge of certain songs, and is held in the closed house of the sick person. It is thus quite easily concealed from the attention of the priests, and the rites have been held in houses only a stone's throw from the priests' residence. Ceremonies involving a large number of participants have fallen out of practice, even among the more traditional savannah dwellers, who are not readily responsive to the dictates of the priests. As in the case of warfare, it is obvious that culture change was on the side of the missionaries and that their efforts were not the crucial factor in the decline of these aspects of Mundurucú culture. On the other hand, more individualized religious practices are still quite active among the Mundurucú. The priests recognize the psychological value of shamanism and have made little effort to inhibit its practice. They are quite realistic as to its tenacity among not only the Indians but the Neo-Brazilian population of the Amazon. But the position of the missionaries is of necessity ambiguous, for the ideological basis of shamanism is inextricably connected with the concepts surrounding sorcery, to which they are adamantly opposed. Frequent sermons are delivered against belief in witchcraft as the cause of illness, and the priests are extremely severe with those of their parishioners who take part in sorcery killings. Their efforts in this direction have had the net effect of causing the Mundurucú to withhold information on their religious beliefs, but it can be confidently stated that even the most acculturated Mundurucú believe firmly in witchcraft.

One of the more interesting facets of contemporary Mundurucú culture on the Cururú River is the general indifference of the people to Christian beliefs, in spite of their acceptance of the mission as an institution. There can be no denial of the fact that the priests are greatly respected by the Mundurucú and have great power among them. Chieftaincy in the Cururú villages is dependent upon recognition by the missionaries, and the major function of the chiefs is to act as intermediaries between the villages and the mission. The priests continually recruit children for the mission school in spite of the passive resistance of their parents, and they are able to bring considerable coercion to bear upon individuals through their economic power. But the Indians are only nominally Christians in spite of this influence and the intensive catechization to which they are exposed.

The following chapters describe the manner in which the Indians have integrated and syncretized Christianity into their own belief system. This process

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had doubtless begun long before the establishment of the present mission; it is probable that items of Christian belief have diffused to the Mundurucú and been reinterpreted by them for a period of more than 150 years. These items of belief are now, from the viewpoint of the Indians, Mundurucú ideas. They recognize the affinity between Christian concepts and stories and some of their own, but they shrug off the former by saying that that is the way the priests tell the stories. Some informants thought that the priests had learned them from the Mundurucú—and learned them poorly.

The vast majority of Christian teachings have not, of course, been integrated into Mundurucú culture, and the Indians are exposed to these alien beliefs whenever they visit the mission or are visited by priests. Some of these, as the concepts of sin and damnation, are well known to the people, but make no emotional impact upon them. The idea of sin, especially original sin, is predicated upon the type of internalized authority more characteristic of the members of a complex society. Mundurucú social control is not dependent upon a sense of guilt, and the structure of personal relations is adequate to govern individuals. The Indians look upon this central theme of Christianity with mixed views. Some feel that hell is the particular destination of white people, but others barely bother to think about it at all. This summarizes the attitude of most Mundurucú toward missionary instruction. They rarely disbelieve the priests, for the latter are regarded as wise and sincere men. But their teachings are thought to be those of white men and thus to be true only for white men. There is no single and absolute body of unchangeable truth to the Mundurucú mind. Within their own mythology, for example, there are two separate origins of man; logically, this appears contradictory, but the Mundurucú do not put these beliefs to the test of logic. This statement does not imply that the Indians are illogical. Rather, it merely suggests that they, like most primitives, are not theologians. For this reason, the native and Christian beliefs coexist quite easily; but most Mundurucú have little interest in the latter, although they may not actively resist and reject them.

Social and Economic Changes

Although it is doubtful that Christian proselytization has resulted in a large-scale displacement of native beliefs, the fact still remains that many aspects of Mundurucú religion are in full decline. This decadence is not understandable as the result of a conflict of patterns of belief. Rather we must view religion, with Durkheim, as being in some way an expression of the mode of organization of the society. Also we are not concerned merely with belief, but with the closely connected subject of ritual; and the form of ritual is directly related to the structure of the social group that implements it.

With this thought in mind, we can review some of the major changes that have taken place in Mundurucú society since their contact with the whites. First, the Mundurucú were evidently patrilocal, as contrasted to their later matrilocality, until some time in the early nineteenth century.[12] This change in residence patterns revolutionized Mundurucú social structure. More than 40

[12] See Murphy (1956) for a full discussion of the causes and implications of this change.

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II. HEROES AND SPIRITS

771 776 MUNDURUCÚ RELIGION is animistic in its broadest outlines, although vague and unpersonalized concepts of power pervade belief. Spirits and powers are active agents in Mundurucú life, and the constant manipulation and propitiation of them are essential to the well-being of the tribe.

CULTURE HEROES

773 Culture heroes were people of great supernatural power who lived in mythological times and who were responsible for creating people and much of the animal world. They are also believed to have endowed the Mundurucú with certain items of their culture, although the origin of most of it is not rationalized by mythology. Culture heroes are considered by the Mundurucú to be people of a remote past who accomplished wonderful deeds and then passed out of contact with the world of people and nature. They are in no way worshipped or manipulated nor are they objects of fear and veneration or, outside of their existence in the myth cycle, the subjects of much thought or interest.

One culture hero, Karusakaibö, stands above all the rest to such a degree that C. Strömer has referred to him as a "Hochgott."[1] Although the "Gott" stem of the appelation, as applied to Karusakaibö, does violence to most definitions of deity, Karusakaibö's dominant position in Mundurucú mythology is undeniable. Like many culture heroes, his origin is unexplained. He exists in a cycle of six myths in the course of which people, the peccary, and the tapir are created, and the hills and sky are formed. Karusakaibö, although an extraordinary person of great power, was believed to be a Mundurucú who lived in a village named Uacuparí, situated near, but not identical with, a recent Mundurucú village of the same name. His son Korumtau, his wife Shikiridjá, and his sisters also enter into his adventures.

773 797 Karusakaibö has been syncretized by the Mundurucú with the Christian God preached to them by missionaries from the nineteenth century to the present day. The missionaries followed the example of the Jesuits of the early colonial period and have translated "God" as Tupan, the Tupian thunder deity; the Mundurucú have partly integrated the Christian and native myth cycles by incorporating pleasing tales from the Old and New Testament into their own mythology and substituting their own Karusakaibö for the missionary's Tupan. However, the subtleties of the concept of the Trinity have resulted in some ambiguity, and Karusakaibö is equated alternately with the Father and the Son.

773 797 842 Identification of the Christian deity and the principal Mundurucú culture hero has altered the position of the latter somewhat. Many Indians, especially those in closest contact with the mission, offer the influence of Karusakaibö as explanation for many phenomena not specifically accounted for in the cycle of Karusakaibö myths. As an example, various women stated that a couple must copulate several times to have children. After sufficient semen is accumulated within the woman, Karusakaibö (or Tupan, according to some informants) enters

[1] Strömer, 1932, pp. 5–6.

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VI. RELIGION IN A CHANGING SOCIETY

IN THE FIRST CHAPTER of this study it was suggested that changes in Mundurucú religion could better be understood through an analysis of changes in other aspects of the culture than through knowledge of the activities of the missionaries. This is not to deny that the priests are and have been powerful and influential figures among the Indians. But their proselytizing efforts have consistently been realized only after certain social and economic changes have taken place. Also, changes in religion have consisted principally in the disappearance of activities and beliefs. The acquisition of Christianity has been an extremely slow process, although it might be hypothesized that it will become accelerated with further disintegration of Mundurucú society.

Until very recent years, the core of Mundurucú religious beliefs was the relationship between the world of humans and that of the game animals; the sharp decline of this aspect of Mundurucú religion is one of the most striking changes. The bond between animals and humans was clearly expressed in the complex of beliefs and rites connected with the spirit mothers of the game, and the *Araiarai* and *Dajearuparíp* ceremonies were the most important of all Mundurucú rituals. Their enactment protected humans from the vengeance of the spirits and promoted the fertility and availability of game. Even the sacred trumpets, originally the abodes of ancestral spirits of localized clans, acquired a vague and undefined relationship with the animal spirits. Warfare, also, was rationalized by the beneficent influence of the trophy head upon these supernaturals. Furthermore, the shaman was not only responsible for feeding the spirits, but he was believed to be able to cure the animals that dwell in human form in the Land of the Game, much as he cures the tame game animals found in every Mundurucú village.

The closeness of the human-animal bond can be seen in other aspects of belief. Mythology abounds with accounts of animals that at one time had human forms, and the origin of certain species from the metamorphosis of humans is common. That the reverse can also take place is seen in the conversion of people into animals during the *Duparíp* ceremony. The best example of the merging and interpenetration of the two realms is the saga of Perisuát, who became almost animal through an extended and solitary stay in the forest.

The relationship between Mundurucú society and the animal kingdom was one of symbiosis. The Mundurucú depended upon the animals for subsistence, and the animals, through their spirit mothers, depended upon the Mundurucú for the performance of rituals essential to their well-being and increase. The disappearance of these rituals is explained quite simply by the Mundurucú as owing to the lack of shamans sufficiently powerful to protect the animal spirits and human participants from attacks by the *Yuruparí*. This view is true to the extent that there are fewer shamans among the contemporary Mundurucú, but it also reflects a characteristic fatalism and apathy toward the aboriginal culture. Not only are modern shamans said to be weaker, but men, in general, are not believed to be as strong, brave, and wise as were their forebears. And game is not as plentiful as it was in times past, nor are women considered as beautiful and desirable.

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771/178 In short, the Mundurucú view their present condition with apathy and face the future with pessimism. They make no great effort to preserve past practices because they feel the struggle is futile and their way of life altered beyond redemption. As one Mundurucú informant phrased it: "We are now all *pariwat* [non-Mundurucú]."

Reasons for this attitude can be found in the effects of more than a century and a half of contact with white society. During this period the population has been assailed by European-introduced epidemic diseases, and large numbers of people have migrated to the vicinity of white settlements where trade goods can be procured. The present Mundurucú population is probably one quarter that of the mid-nineteenth century. This depopulation and the increased involvement in the extraction of wild latex brought an end to warfare during the early part of this century. This had the obvious effect of terminating the ceremonial cycle devoted to the trophy heads, but it also had other repercussions. Warfare was, even more importantly than hunting, the principle expression of masculine values among the Mundurucú. It served to provide the men of several villages with a common goal, thereby promoting social cohesion, and it constituted a means of safely releasing repressed hostilities that had accumulated between members of the society. The end of warfare thus deprived the males of their sustaining and fortifying self-image as valiant warriors and removed one of the chief bases of social unity.

The pursuit of the hunt, however, continued after the termination of military forays. But the Mundurucú had become deeply committed to rubber tapping, and the demands of this activity upon their time forced them to depend even more heavily upon fishing during the dry season, when rubber is collected. Today, the men of the savannah villages still hunt almost daily during the rainy season, but three quarters of the surviving Mundurucú population, who live along the banks of the larger streams, rely chiefly upon fish as a source of protein throughout the year.

The shift from hunting as a primary substance activity further undercut the cultural emphasis upon masculine values, which were central to the religious complex surrounding game animals. Of even greater importance, it stripped the ceremonies of their economic rationale and made them less meaningful in terms of mundane activity. Finally, the progressive, ongoing fragmentation of Mundurucú society has not only induced apathy toward the traditional culture, but it has weakened the group unity upon which the performance of ceremonies depended, and which they expressed.

Collective religious activity, in general, has almost completely disappeared among the Mundurucú. Small gatherings take place when the sacred musical instruments are moved to a new men's house, and the trumpets are still played a few nights a week. But social change has had a profound effect upon this sector of Mundurucú religion also. The connection between the instruments and the clans was based essentially on a patrilocal rule of residence. Under it, the dominant or only clan of the village could quite reasonably be considered as the owner of the village instruments which were the repository of the ancestral spirits of the clan. Since the change to matrilocality, the instruments are considered to belong to

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the clan [illegible] man who manufactured them. If he dies or moves to another village, it is quite possible that no other man of that community will belong to the clan owning the trumpets. It is, therefore, understandable that informants were often vague when asked to explain the connection between clans and instruments. Many people believed that the trumpets had souls of their own and that these were the most important spirits resident within them. And, as has been mentioned, it was commonly thought that the playing of the instruments was pleasing to the spirit mothers of the game.

The actual function of the trumpets in present-day Mundurucú society has little to do with clanship, but much to do with the maintenance of the sharp dichotomy between the sexes. The instruments are primarily the property of the village men and are expressive of their unity and identity in the face of the women. In this connection it is significant that the villages that arose along the Cururú River have never had either the men's house or the sacred trumpets. As a corollary, the gulf between the sexes in social participation and labor that characterizes the savannah villages is lacking. On the Cururú the nuclear family is the basic social and economic unit. Men eat and sleep with their families and join their wives in tasks that would be considered degrading by a savannah dweller. But the demands of the rubber trade, combined with the covert hostility and factionalism that exist in all Mundurucú villages, are currently promoting migration from the savannah communities either to the Cururú River or to isolated residence along other streams. The end result will be the complete lapse of the sacred instruments and the men's organization.

The only other extant ceremonial is the one devoted to curing victims of soul loss. Since human souls are stolen by the spirit mothers of the game, this rite is also one of the few remaining religious acts that deals with this category of supernaturals. It is most significant that all the important means of obtaining the good will of these spirits and the increase of game have lapsed, although the Mundurucú have clung tenaciously to the technique of defending themselves against the spirits and rectifying the damage done by them. It may be said of the religion of the contemporary Mundurucú that it has retained those items that specifically protect the individual and, to a less degree the society, from harm though dropping those features that were not so immediately defensive in nature and which were more expressive of the integration and central values of the society.

To continue this line of thought, we turn to a consideration of those elements of Mundurucú religion that have maintained greatest vitality—shamanism and sorcery.[1] The two institutions are inseparable in the Mundurucú mind; the shaman cures diseases, which are invariably caused by sorcery, and the sorcerers are recruited from the ranks of the shamans. But disease, its explanation and its cure, has much greater significance than as a system of belief. Kluckhohn has shown for the Navaho that sorcery plays a vital role in the release of aggression,[2] and Beatrice Blythe Whiting's monograph *Paiute Sorcery*[2] shifts emphasis somewhat and stresses the function of sorcery as a mechanism of social control. Both of these fac-

[1] Kluckhohn, 1944.
[2] Whiting, 1950.

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tors, but primarily that of aggression release, play a part in Mundurucú sorcery also.

In a previously published work[9] I set forth the thesis that aggression cannot be tolerated in Mundurucú society because of the combination of a matrilocal residence rule and a patrilineal descent system. Under these social conditions each man has two sets of allegiances, one to his clan and the other to the household and village of his wife. Since the two do not coincide, he occupies social roles that potentially can conflict. That is, a quarrel between households or villages may well pit fellow clansmen against each other, and, correspondingly, conflict between clans can cause internal dissension within villages and even households. Open aggression is therefore avoided among the Mundurucú, and, although interpersonal and interfactional tensions abound within the group, they are generally suppressed. The feeling of horror at the outward display of hostility between men is so strong that informants were unwilling to give data upon its occurrence, although it occasionally happens.

Violence during warfare or the execution of a sorcerer, however, is thoroughly condoned. Attacks upon enemy tribes served to channel hostility upon surrogate objects outside the society and thus promoted social cohesion, but this avenue of release is no longer open. The only remaining catharsis for aggression is the practice of sorcery and the execution of suspected sorcerers. Another alternative, withdrawal from the frustrating situation, has been made possible by the general pacification of the upper Tapajós area and the consequent possibility of flight from village life. In former times it would have been most risky for an individual or family to forsake the mutual security offered by the local group, but today it is common for Mundurucú to live in the midst of the Brazilian rubber-gathering population. Even within the confines of Mundurucú territory, the tendency toward neolocal residence makes isolated or semi-isolated existence socially acceptable.

Mundurucú sorcery has a number of interesting facets. It is impossible to induce any shaman to admit the practice, but the body of detailed knowledge of witchcraft techniques suggests that it indeed exists. Granting that witchcraft is not completely a figment of the Mundurucú imagination, the practitioner undoubtedly derives considerable gratification of his antisocial inclinations. Also, the Mundurucú generally fix suspicion of sorcery upon the more deviant shamans. Thus of the two people known by me to have been suspected of witchcraft, one was a rather humorless, silent, and aloof man, and the other, although more outgoing, far outstripped the other members of the village in rubber production. The threat of sorcery accusation, it may be inferred, tends to enforce social participation and conformity.

These factors of covert release of aggression and social control are, however, applicable only to the ranks of shamans. Persons born without shamanistic powers are unable to practice witchcraft, and sorcerers do not practice on behalf of others. But the dogged persistence of belief in black magic among the members of the society at large suggests that it does perform a very vital social function. It has al-

[9] Murphy, 1957.

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ready been mentioned that depopulation, the disintegration of the social structure, and the decline of such highly valued activities as warfare and the hunt have robbed the Mundurucú of much that was vital and positive in their way of life and left them disheartened and apathetic. Frustration, in the classic paradigm, normally leads to aggression, the expression of which is forbidden in this culture. Fear of sorcery among the Mundurucú is a means of embodying and phrasing in understandable terms not only the manifold anxieties of their existence but the latent aggression that nearly all members of the society carry within them. In this connection, it will be remembered that the intrusive objects made by the sorcerer are spread abroad and are not usually directed against any one person. The sorcerer is then, as the Mundurucú say, malevolent toward society in general. This is not only logically consistent with the indiscriminate ravages of epidemic disease, but it also suggests that the accusers of the sorcerer displace generalized aggression to his person and eradicate it through his execution.

That considerable aggression is unleashed upon the executed sorcerer can be inferred from the quality of the executions and the way in which informants report them. Many, if not most, executions take place from ambush, but some are bloody affairs in which the accused is beaten to death with clubs. And the Mundurucú enthusiastically relate these episodes with obvious hatred for the victim. The men of the village of Cabruá derived evident satisfaction by pointing to a brown smear on the posts of their men's house and saying: "That is where we wiped the blood of our last sorcerer from our hands." This emotional intensity parallels that reported by Kluckhohn among the Navaho,[4] and among both peoples this is atypical behavior.

Since aggression is related not only to real interpersonal differences but to frustration and general insecurity, it should be expected that witchcraft accusations would be most common in periods of stress. This is borne out by the Mundurucú practice of refraining from direct action against the sorcerer until illness becomes severe in the community and deaths occur. Unfortunately, we do not have sufficient historical material to demonstrate conclusively, as did Kluckholn, that sorcery troubles are correlated with historical periods of crisis. The best primary source on the Mundurucú, the report of the Brazilian engineer Antonio Tocantins, in 1875, describes sorcery executions as extremely frequent and one of the major problems of the Bacabal mission.[5] But it is difficult to evaluate the significance of this data and to control all the variables in the situation without similarly complete reports from other periods. In 1875 the Mundurucú still waged war and therefore had available a means of expression of hostility which had the obvious advantage of being directed outside the society. But on the other hand, Mundurucú society was then being subjected to its greatest threat since the contact with the whites, for these were the first years of the rubber-extraction period, and the Indians themselves were becoming increasingly involved in the industry. White rubber tappers were penetrating the area in growing numbers, and the mission had just been established. In

[4] Kluckhohn, 1944, p. 56.
[5] Tocantins, 1877, pp. 107–111.

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third village, however, the power of the chief's family must have been weak, for both he and his son were slain as sorcerers by the other men of the village. The tendency for villages to fractionate because of sorcery fears and accusations is probably greater now than in the past. Not only is village cohesion in general much weaker, but the disappearance of such leadership activities as heading war parties and trading on behalf of the village as a whole has made it most difficult for the chief to obtain the consensus necessary to carrying out an execution. It must not be thought, however, that lack of unanimity in sorcerer killings indicates a decline in belief in black magic; it rather reflects distrust of the sincerity of the accusers and the existence of latent factionalism that may not be directly caused by witchcraft. But these occasions bring conflicts to a head and open breaches that are in many cases irreparable and can be resolved only by the removal of one party.

This analysis of the Mundurucú data indicates that although the institution of sorcery may be viewed in one light as socially integrative, so far as it acts as a cathartic for aggression, it may also be most disruptive of social cohesion, for it often aggravates tensions.[6] It would seem that shamanism and sorcery have become complementary to the central direction of social and economic change. The ecological accommodation to increased participation in rubber production calls for the dispersal of the population into ever smaller units in the vicinity of the stands of wild rubber trees. Correspondingly, sorcery conflicts tend to disintegrate larger village units while being integrative for factions within the village, which then commonly establish themselves as small local groups. This is not the only means by which social fission occurs. Latent conflicts that do not involve sorcery sometimes cause families and factions to leave villages; others leave because of the economic expediency of residence near their rubber avenues. But sorcery remains as a contributing motivation for the participants in the process. The Mundurucú example thus suggests that the institution of sorcery may promote the cohesion of a society as a whole, but only where other bases for such cohesion exist.

The close relationship of religion to the social structure can be seen quite as clearly in the context of change as in a synchronic dimension. As the society has become progressively divested of those mechanisms that integrated tribe and village, so also have group religious activities fallen into abeyance. What remains are the essentially individual practices of shamanism and sorcery. This is the same process noted for other parts of South America by Steward, and which he has phrased as part of a change in "level of sociocultural integration."[7] But beyond the scope of participation in religious activity we have seen another selective factor determining which segments of religion will persist. This, in brief, is the simple question of whether the element serves some social function in the changed setting. By this criterion, the warfare ceremonies have totally disappeared, and the ceremonies for the animal spirits have declined with the shift of a large part of the population from hunting to fishing. Similarly, the

[6] Kluckhohn (1944, p. 71) has noted the presence of disruptive elements in Navaho witchcraft also, although the analysis of these tendencies were beyond the scope of his treatise.

[7] Steward, 1951.

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182 771 178 religious complex of the sacred musical instruments is extant only in five villages. The beliefs connected with all these rituals remain, but, lacking expression in action, are no longer effectively transmitted to the young.

On the other hand, those aspects of religion that are keyed to the persistent problems of Mundurucú society show great tenacity. Sorcery beliefs may be currently disruptive of tribal and village integration, but they maintain a vital social function in terms of the needs of a society undergoing fractionation and individualization. These are beliefs that explain human malice and suffering and offer techniques for defense against them. They are not closely linked to and dependent upon the peculiarities of native Mundurucú culture, or of any particular lowland South American culture, and it is undoubtedly for this reason that shamanism and sorcery remain active among the peasants of the impoverished Amazon and can be found among the lower classes of its cities. The maintenance of specifically defensive functions of native religion is not peculiar to South America. We need only look to the United States, where the Sun Dance and the peyote cult have become primarily curing rites. These are flourishing parts of radically changed cultures and expressions of altered social systems and cannot be looked upon as lag phenomena. If there is a functional relation between religion and society, it must also exist in historical depth.

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In the sphere of material culture, the planting and use of cotton were introduced after their contact with the whites, and their only watercraft were bark canoes of the type the German ethnologist Karl von den Steinen saw in the upper Xingú.[4] The moiety-phratry-clan system of Mundurucú social organization is considerably more complex than most Tupian societies, and the system of kinship nomenclature is correspondingly divergent. Mundurucú religion follows the broad outlines of supernatural beliefs and rites of the area, but there are significant differences in mythology.

These are only a few points of dissimilarity between the Mundurucú and the other Tupian tribes of the coast and lower Amazon region, but when considered with the linguistic data, they are sufficient to suggest a considerable period of independent development. There are also fundamental points of similarity: subsistence techniques are much akin to those found throughout the tropical-forest region of South America, and the Mundurucú are a village-dwelling people. And in common with other tribes of the area, class stratification is absent, political controls are simple, and the fundamental organization of the society is established along lines of kinship.

Certain characteristics lead me to suspect that the Mundurucú may have originally dwelled south of their present habitat. Their lack of cotton and the dug-out canoe and the absence of cannibalism and alcoholic beverages suggest that they may have come from the Planalto de Mato Grosso. Also, although they were and are industrious horticulturalists, their supernatural beliefs and ceremonies are only marginally concerned with cultivation; their major emphasis in ritual is on hunting. One other factor suggests a more southerly origin. The traditional Mundurucú villages were situated in the northernmost savannah coun-

[4] Steinen, 1894, pp. 222–223.

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to as in the past, the conflicting modes of segmentation noted above still largely apply. And, correspondingly, aggression is repressed and the highest degree of harmony and coöperation is enjoined on the members of the society. The even and calm tonality of interpersonal relationships is most evident in the village, but it extends also to all men of the tribe. The men are unaggressive and uncompetitive; it is difficult to elicit relative prestige rankings from Mundurucú informants and practically impossible to learn of the overt hostilities that occasionally occur. The observer receives the initial impression of enormous cohesion, but prolonged residence in any community reveals severe grievances and smoldering factionalism. Despite these tendencies, the savannah Mundurucú do not fight among themselves, and they maintain the external appearance of solidarity and coöperation. But the society is extremely vulnerable to factionalism and hostility; social cohesion is precarious, and disaffection is an important motive for emigration from the savannah villages.

Today, this communality is primarily operative on the level of village organization; coöperative endeavors among several communities are largely defunct. Warfare and the ceremonial cycle have lapsed, and intervillage relations are structured by personal ties of kinship and not by the interdependency of villages as groups. Tribalism has further decayed as a consequence of the migration to the shores of the Cururú River and the alienation of the latter residents. But clan, language, and much of the traditional culture remain to maintain the boundaries between "people" and "foreigners."

SOCIAL ASPECTS OF RELIGION

Certain features of Mundurucú religious belief and activity are of particular relevance to the economy and social

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structure.[6] The religious life of the contemporary savannah dwellers has been largely reduced to the practices of shamanism and sorcery, and group ceremonial activities have for the most part disappeared with little prospect of revival. One or two half-hearted attempts have been made by older men to resurrect parts of the ritual cycle, but they have met with lack of enthusiasm on the part of the young and have failed largely through inability to organize properly. Today, the Munduruc\u00fa regard the decadence of their religion as part of their transition to the status of foreigner (pariwat), and have resigned themselves to this situation.

The focus of Munduruc\u00fa religion in the past was the relationship between society and the animal world. This was consistent with the cultural emphasis on hunting, in terms of importance to subsistence and as a highly valued masculine activity.[7] The mythology is concerned with the origins of species of animals, which significantly were either human or had human form in mythological times, and an important class of supernaturals is believed to exert protection over game. The latter spirits are of two kinds: there is a generic spirit "mother" of all game animals, and several of the more important species have their own particular spirit "mothers." If offense is given to these supernaturals through such means as killing an animal for its hide and leaving the carcass to rot, they take swift vengeance against the guilty party. This is usually done by supernaturally bringing injury upon the culprit. But the spirit "mothers" can also be benevolent and helpful to the community and can make game abundant, if humans observe proper relations with them.

[6] A full description of Munduruc\u00fa religion may be found in my monograph *Munduruc\u00fa Religion* (1958).

[7] It will be remembered that the Munduruc\u00fa believe that the males wrested the sacred trumpets from the control of the women because only men could supply the meat that must be offered to the instruments.

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monly entangled in sorcery cases, either as accused or accusers, reflects the strains in the political system. Reduced village size contributes to the disruptive effects of sorcery accusations, for even if a man has only a few defenders, this may constitute a significant bloc within the community under current circumstances.

One result of witch killings has been a decrease in the number of shamans. This not only includes people who were actually executed, but also those who escaped or who left for fear of future accusation. Given the inevitability of disease and death and the Mundurucú belief that sorcerers are the responsible agents, the position of the shamans is very insecure. There had been no sorcery killings in Cabruá for several years, as of the time of our stay, but illnesses and deaths had occurred. The step son of the chief was being effectively protected by his family, leaving two other shamans open to accusation. One decided to move to his rubber-avenue home on the Tropas River, and the other immediately followed suit rather than be faced with the unhappy prospect of being the only available scapegoat. Cabruá was then left without a practicing shaman, and the community was deprived of one of the services that village life traditionally afforded.

Changes in Mundurucú religion show a close relationship to economic and social shifts. Aspects of belief and practice that promoted and affirmed the well-being and values of the society at large and which were best staged by a unified social group have disappeared. What remains are essentially practices that are defensive against prevailing fears and anxieties and which are highly individualistic in practice. A circular process is at work here. The decline of group ceremonial not only reflects the weakening of Mundurucú social structure, but it has aided in its debilitation. Fellow clan members are no longer united by